

Three Rivers Community School District, St. Joseph County  
Minutes of the Board of Education Organizational Meeting  
Monday, January 15, 2024

Approved Minutes

The Organizational Meeting of the Board of Education was called to order by Superintendent Nikki Nash at 6:00 PM.

Present: Julia Awe, Linda Baker, Melissa Bliss, Nichole Cover, Ross Daniels, Ben Karle, Erin Nowak

Absent: None

Administration Present: Nikki Nash, Melissa Frye, Jen Graber, Brian Leonard, Carrie Balk, Jason Bingaman, Julie Bentley, Greg Rutten, David Soderquist, Anthony Wolbert, Nick VandenBrink, Matt Stofer, Jamie Phillips

Pledge of Allegiance: Superintendent Nash led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance

Board Member Resignation: Before the Organizational Meeting got started, Board Member Ben Karle announced his resignation from the Board which would take effect immediately. Superintendent Nash and the Board thanked him for his time serving before he excused himself. Superintendent Nash and the Board announced that the District would be sending out a notification regarding the vacancy on 1/16/2024; letters of interest will be accepted until Friday, January 26, 2024 with the interviews and selection of a candidate taking place at a Special Meeting on Monday, January 29, 2024 at 6pm.

Approval of the Agenda: Motion by Member Cover, with support from Member Awe, to approve the agenda as presented. After a roll call vote, 6-0, Superintendent Nash declared the motion as approved unanimously.

Yea: Awe, Baker, Bliss, Cover, Daniels, Nowak

Absent: None

Reaffirmation of Board Bylaws: Motion by Member Cover, with support from Member Awe, to reaffirm the following Board Bylaws as presented:

- a. 0152 - OFFICERS
- b. 0163 - PRESIDING OFFICER
- c. 0171.1 - PRESIDENT
- d. 0171.2 - VICE-PRESIDENT
- e. 0171.3 - SECRETARY
- f. 0171.4 - TREASURER
- g. 0164.1 - REGULAR MEETINGS
- h. 0164.2 - SPECIAL MEETINGS
- i. 0164.3 - EMERGENCY MEETINGS
- j. 0165.1 - REGULAR MEETINGS
- k. 0165.2 - CHANGE OF REGULAR MEETINGS
- l. 0165.3 - SPECIAL MEETINGS
- m. 0165.4 - EMERGENCY MEETINGS
- n. 0165.6 - CANCELLATION
- o. 0166 - AGENDA
- p. 0166.1 - CONSENT AGENDA

- q. 0167.3 - PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN BOARD MEETINGS
- r. 0161 - PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY
- s. 0167.1 - VOTING
- t. 0155 - COMMITTEES
- u. 0144.1 - COMPENSATION
- v. 0142.5 - VACANCIES

After a roll call vote, 6-0, Superintendent Nash declared the motion as approved unanimously.

Yea: Awe, Baker, Bliss, Cover, Daniels, Nowak  
Absent: None

Election of Officers Superintendent Nash opened the nominations for Board Officers at 6:10 PM. With no slate of candidates provided, the Board selected each seat individually.

**PRESIDENT**

Member Baker made the motion to nominate Member Nowak as President. Superintendent Nash asked if there were any other nominations; seeing none, nominations were closed.

After a roll call vote 6-0, Superintendent Nash declared the motion as approved unanimously.

Yea: Awe, Baker, Bliss, Cover, Daniels, Nowak  
Absent: None

With the Election of the President complete, Superintendent Nash turned the duties of presiding officer over to President Nowak.

**VICE PRESIDENT**

Member Awe made the motion to nominate Member Bliss as Vice President. President Nowak asked if there were any other nominations; seeing none, nominations were closed.

After a roll call vote 6-0, President Nowak declared the motion as approved unanimously.

Yea: Awe, Baker, Bliss, Cover, Daniels, Nowak  
Absent: None

**SECRETARY**

Member Nowak made the motion to nominate Member Cover as Secretary. President Nowak asked if there were any other nominations; seeing none, nominations were closed.

After a roll call vote 6-0, President Nowak declared the motion as approved unanimously.

Yea: Awe, Baker, Bliss, Cover, Daniels, Nowak  
Absent: None

**TREASURER**

Member Bliss made the motion to nominate Member Awe as Treasurer. President Nowak asked if there were any other nominations; seeing none, nominations were closed.

After a roll call vote 6-0, President Nowak declared the motion as approved unanimously.

Yea: Awe, Baker, Bliss, Cover, Daniels, Nowak

Absent: None

Appointment of  
Board Members to  
Subcommittees:

President Nowak set the Board Committee Chairs as follows:

Standing Subcommittees:

- Curriculum: Erin Nowak (Chair)
- Facilities: Linda Baker (Chair)
- Finance: Julia Awe (Chair)
- Human Resources: Nichole Cover (Chair)
- Policy: Ross Daniels (Chair)

Other Board Committees:

- MASB Labor Relations: Erin Nowak
- SJCISD School Board Association: Linda Baker
- SJCISD School Board Association Alternate: Nichole Cover
- MASB Representatives: Ross Daniels & Linda Baker
- MASB Alternates: Nichole Cover & Melissa Bliss

Adoption of the  
Board Meeting  
Dates for 2024:

Motion by Member Bliss, with support from Member Cover, to adopt the Board of Education Meeting Dates as presented. After a roll call vote, 6-0, President Nowak declared the motion as approved unanimously.

Yea: Awe, Baker, Bliss, Cover, Daniels, Nowak

Absent: None

Discussions/  
Presentations:

**Board Recognition Month Presentation**

Superintendent Nash read aloud the press release designating January as School Board Recognition Month and presented the Board Members with certificates of appreciation from TRCS and MASB for their dedication to the community and public schools.

**Out of State Field Trip - Hoppin Elementary**

David Soderquist, Principal of Hoppin Elementary, provided the Board with an overview of the proposed Hoppin Elementary out of state trip to Bendix Woods County Park which is up for approval this evening.

**TRMS 8th Grade trip to Cedar Point, OH**

Jason Bingaman, Principal of TRMS, provided the Board with an overview of the annual Cedar Point Middle School trip which is up for approval this evening.

Superintendent's  
Report:

**New Work Session Format**

Superintendent Nash provided the Board with the new format for Board Work Sessions moving forward. The Board will now meet as a whole in order to hear each

Committee's updates. Each Committee will still have a Chair who will oversee Committee specific meetings as needed.

Technology Director Recommendation - John Londono

Superintendent Nash presented the Board with an overview of John Londono's background, the candidate chosen to fill the Director of Technology position. John Londono's contract is up for approval this evening

Public Comment: Public Comment was offered.

Consent Agenda: Motion by Member Cover, with support from Member Bliss, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. After a roll call vote, 6-0, President Nowak declared the motion as approved unanimously.

Yea: Awe, Baker, Bliss, Cover, Daniels, Nowak

Absent: None

The Consent Agenda consisted of:

1. Approval of the December 18, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes and December 20, 2023 Special Meeting Minutes.
2. Approval of the December 1 - December 31, 2023 Accounts Payable Check Register dated January 12, 2024 totaling \$1,486,990.40.
3. Approval of the Payroll Change Register for December 2023 dated January 8, 2024.
4. Approval of the Bond Invoice Payment Report dated January 12, 2024 totaling \$1,687,830.51.

Out of State Field Trip - Hoppin Elementary: Motion by Member Cover, with support from Member Nowak, to approve the Hoppin Elementary out of state trip to Bendix Woods County Park trip as presented. After a roll call vote, 6-0, President Nowak declared the motion as approved unanimously.

Yea: Awe, Baker, Bliss, Cover, Daniels, Nowak

Absent: None

TRMS 8th Grade trip to Cedar Point: Motion by Member Awe, with support from Member Cover, to approve the Cedar Point Middle School trip as presented. After a roll call vote, 6-0, President Nowak declared the motion as approved unanimously.

Yea: Awe, Baker, Bliss, Cover, Daniels, Nowak

Absent: None

Administrator Contract: Motion by Member Cover, with support from Member Awe, to approve the Administrator Contract for the new Director of Technology, John Londono, as presented. After a roll call vote, 6-0, President Nowak declared the motion as approved unanimously.

Yea: Awe, Baker, Bliss, Cover, Daniels, Nowak

Absent: None

Three Rivers Community School District, St. Joseph County  
Minutes of the Board of Education Organizational Meeting  
Monday, January 15, 2024

Approved Minutes

- Board Calendar: President Nowak made the announcement that now that they have been approved, meetings for 2024 will be posted online and at the Central Office per Board Bylaws. The next scheduled meeting of the Board of Education is a Work Session on Monday, February 5, 2024.
- Board Comment: Board comment was offered and received.
- Adjournment: Motion by Member Awe, with support from Member Cover, to adjourn the meeting. After a roll call vote, 7-0, President Nowak declared the motion approved unanimously.
- Yea: Awe, Baker, Bliss, Cover, Daniels, Nowak  
Absent: None
- The meeting adjourned at 6:28 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

---

Nichole Cover, Secretary Board of Education

---

Lorie Camino, Recording Secretary